

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
Notice of Public Comment for a Total Maximum Daily Load Study
in Pocomoke Sound/Pocomoke River, Accomack County

The Virginia Department of Environmental Quality will provide a public comment period for a water quality study for Pocomoke Sound/Pocomoke River, located in Accomack County. A request has been made to modify the load allocations (LAs) and waste load allocations (WLAs) for the fecal coliform bacteria Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) due to a calculation error during the TMDL development. Before EPA can approve the requested modifications, the revised LAs and WLAs for the Lower Pocomoke River and Pocomoke Sound must be made available for public comment and review. Once the revised LAs and WLAs have been public noticed, a formal TMDL modification request can be submitted to EPA for review and approval.

The report and revisions may be accessed on the DEQ web site at www.deq.virginia.gov/tmdl. The TMDL was approved by EPA in April 2009.

Pocomoke Sound (VAT-C09E-10) was identified in Virginia's 1998 303(d) TMDL Priority List and Report as impaired for not supporting the Shellfishing Use. The impairment is based on the shellfish harvesting condemnation of Growing Area 75 imposed by the Virginia Department of Health-Division of Shellfish Sanitation.

Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act and §62.1-44.19:7.C of the Code of Virginia, require DEQ to develop TMDLs for pollutants responsible for each impaired water contained in Virginia's 303(d) TMDL Priority List and Report and subsequent Water Quality Assessment Reports.

During the study, a Total Maximum Daily Load was developed for the impaired waters. A TMDL is the total amount of a pollutant a water body can contain and still meet water quality standards. To restore water quality, pollutant levels have to be reduced to the TMDL amount. The Virginia Departments of Environmental Quality, Conservation and Recreation, and Health are working to identify the sources of pollution in the watersheds of these streams.

The public comment period will extend from August 18, 2009 through September 16, 2009.

For additional information or to submit comments, contact Jennifer Howell, in the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, Tidewater Regional Office, 5636 Southern Blvd, Virginia Beach VA 23462, by phone (757) 518-2111 or by e-mail jshowell@deq.virginia.gov.